



## TOWN OF PORTLAND

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### OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF

To: The Members of the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Please accept this testimony regarding HB 6824.

The Officers and members of the Portland Fire Department, 82 strong, ***strongly oppose*** the defunding of the Regional Fire Training Schools, as proposed in the Governor's DESPP budget. These Regional schools which have been formed to deliver efficient and the most advanced training available to local departments have proved to be a vital part in the training of firefighters for years. Middlesex County in particular has recorded the highest number of training hours among other regional schools for many years now. The Portland Fire Department has trained over 100 members through this Regional school since its creation. The elimination of this funding will not only jeopardize the critical need for training each year related to our changing world and the threats against our way of life, but most importantly, the training needed to reduce the risk of line of duty deaths in our service.

We ask that you to join us in the opposition of this budget cut and restore the critical operating fund budget for all Regional schools that was removed in Governor Malloy's proposed budget. Firefighters are challenged every day with new and difficult emergencies. All departments need the funding to provide the highest trained responders to protect not only our local citizens but the many surrounding towns and cities we provide mutual aid too. There is sufficient proof that Regional schools have made a difference in how departments train and operate together.

Thank you ,

*Robert Shea*

Robert Shea  
Chief ,Portland Fire Department  
Past President, Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association